

# REPORT

ON

## NATIVE PAPERS IN BENGAL

FOR THE

### Week ending the 30th June 1900.

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## I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.

THE *Habul Mateen* [Calcutta] of the 18th June has the following:—

HABUL MATEEN,  
June 18th, 1900.

The Persians and Europeans  
contrasted.

It is a well-known fact that trade and commerce are the only means by which a nation or a kingdom can prosper. Trade offers a vast field, and national prosperity is a very important thing. A European statesman says that if the Europeans had not pursued trade, they could not have made such progress in the fine arts; that a handful of men as they are, they could not have spread their supremacy all over the world, and could not have become a wealthy people. In fact, it is trade and commerce which have made them superior to all other nations in art, science, and wealth. Their trade is the cause of their supremacy. It was under the pretext of trade that the Franks established their supremacy in the Far East and among the savages of South Africa. In fact, trade and commerce are the life and soul of the Franks, and through it they came in closer contact with the eastern nations. To them the protection of commerce is an object of cardinal importance and they can undertake any hard work for the protection of their commercial interest. It has very often happened that the Franks (Europeans) have, for the sake of their trade, sacrificed millions of money and men. In fact, the Europeans think that it is trade only which can make a superior people. They generally export articles of their own manufacture to foreign countries, and import gold and silver as their price. They do not popularise articles of foreign manufacture in their own countries by hawking the same—a process which causes a severe drain upon the gold and silver of a country in which such hawking is carried on. In fact, those who do such a thing are coolies of other nations and sellers of the wealth of their own country. The Franks (Europeans) export articles of their home manufacture, but the Persians are not exporters. The good faith and trust which is one of the principal teachings of Islam is absent among them. In order to promote individual interests, they do not hesitate to blast the prospects of national prosperity. The Europeans are a trustworthy people. Money is advanced to them by foreign merchants simply on a view of specimens of their manufactures. It is all this that has made the Franks lords of the whole world.

Re-imposition of customs duties  
in Persian ports.

2. The same paper is sorry to hear that the Persian Government is going to re-impose customs duties in the ports of Persia without the consent of the Persian merchants. It is well known that an arbitrary action is sure to produce varieties of mischief. The Persian officials do not think it worth their while to know whether the people have anything to say to their actions. It has often been complained that the 5 per cent. duty levied on the mercantile goods of the Persian merchants is too heavy for them, but no one has paid any heed to that. Oppressed as they already are by the highhandedness of the Europeans employed in the customs houses of Persia and by the Persian officials and robbers, the Persian merchants, seeing the circular for levying duties, have made up their mind to discontinue their business in Persia.

HABUL MATEEN.

Education in Turkistan.

3. The same paper says that it is a matter of satisfaction that Turkistan is under the rule of a descendant of Chengiz Khan and Timour, and that the people of that country are very comfortable under its present ruler. But it is a regret that in respect of education Turkistan is far behind any other country in the world. Its education is conducted according to the old system—a system which cannot be helpful either to the nation or to the State. Among the 3,060 schools which are maintained at the expense of the State, there is not a single medical school. The Amir of Turkistan, therefore, requires the services of foreign medical men for his own purposes.

HABUL MATEEN.

Extravagance of the Persian  
Government.

4. The same paper is sorry that the Persian Government does not publish an official financial statement. But this much can nevertheless be said that it incurs unnecessary expenses and such expenditure may pauperise the kingdom. For such expenditure no one but the spiritual and temporal leaders of the Persians are responsible.

HABUL MATEEN.



HABUL MATEEN.  
June 18th, 1900.

5. A correspondent of the same paper says that last year so many as about nine hundred military students passed their final examination from a single school in Turkey, and still the Turkish authorities say that the number is insufficient. If the Persian Government be so kind as to manage to spread education in Persia, it can do a great deal of good to the country. The Persians who go to Mecca on pilgrimage, spend large sums of money there, but they do not contribute anything to the Persian exchequer. And the Persians who go to foreign countries for commercial purposes are entirely free from any tax. These are very bad things. It is high time for Persia to awake. Russia has surrounded it on land and water. If Persia, even from to-day, undertake to improve its condition, it can be safely predicted that within ten years the Persians will be a superior nation. It is not probable that His Majesty will pay any attention to what men like us say. But it is the *Hablul Mateen* which can attract the attention of the Persian Government to these things.

SRI SRI VISHNU  
PRIYA-O-  
ANANDA BAZAR  
PATRIKA,  
June 20th, 1900.

6. The *Sri Sri Vishnupriya-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 20th June has the following:—

England's achievement in the war. Will the occupation of the Transvaal State by the British army remove the miseries of the Indian people or arrest the progress of the famine in India? The Indians know that the conquest of the Transvaal will not materially affect the destinies of this country. The subjugation of the two Boer Republics in South Africa will give an impetus to British trade and increase England's wealth. This will lead to considerable improvement in the condition of the English people, but what is that to the Indians? It therefore follows that the Indian rejoicings on the fall of Pretoria were due to some other cause. In this matter the Indians see no difference between their interests and those of their rulers and rejoice at the success of British arms because it is success that has been achieved by their sovereign.

The Boers are not utter strangers to the English. Both Boer and Briton lived at one time under the same Government and enjoyed equal rights. Originally they were one people, lived in the same country, and followed the same religion. Mr. Gladstone, one of the most distinguished statesmen that the world has ever produced and the pride of the English nation, adopted various measures to preserve the independence of the Boers. Everybody also knows that English capital and English trade have done much to develop the resources of the Transvaal. If Boer independence is now destroyed by the English, the action will not bring the least glory to England.

Again, when in the course of time and as the latest development of civilisation, martial glory will come to be regarded as a hateful outcome of the promptings of a bestial instinct, and destruction of other people's independence and annexation of their territories will cease to be viewed as heroic achievements, Englishmen, it seems to us, will recall this South African business with shame. We are deeply attached to the English, who in the flush of victory, are now unable to see the performances that will find a place in the annals of the future, but we believe that what we now consider our glory will in time become matters of lasting reproach. It was in an evil moment that the Jameson raid occurred in South Africa. That raid was the cause of the present sanguinary war. The English lost all sense of duty, and military men fanned the war craze. The flame of war was kindled and consumed the Boers who, fired by the desire to maintain their independence, flung themselves into it in crowds. The loss in men and money suffered by the English in this war is without parallel. It did not certainly behove an enlightened Christian people to allow themselves, under the influence of pride and an idle sentiment, to be drawn into such a conflict.

SANJIVANI,  
June 21st, 1900.

7. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 21st June has the following:—

The future of the Boer Republics. We do not know on what plea the English nation will now proceed to annex the Boer Republics to the British Empire. Of course, there will be no lack of arguments if there is really a desire for annexation. But it is to be hoped that the English people will not resort to any dishonest pleas in this matter. The Boer war has clearly shown with what eye the other powerful



European nations look upon the expansion of the British Empire. Many regard the war as an outcome of the farsighted statesmanship of the late Prince Bismarck. England has lost a good deal in this war. She has lost wealth, but the gold mines in South Africa may make that loss good. She has lost men, but though English girls will have to remain unmarried for a long time to come, there will be an increase of England's heroic population in the course of time.

Annexation of the Transvaal will lead to far-reaching consequences. There are already difficulties in China. It behoves the British Government to carefully consider all things before they arrive at a decision regarding the future settlement of the Dutch Republics in South Africa.

8. The *Education Gazette* [Chinsura] of the 22nd June contains a long extract from an article in the *Prabhat* [Calcutta] of the 13th idem (Report on Native Papers for the 16th June 1900, paragraph 11), and writes

EDUCATION GAZETTE,  
June 22nd, 1900.

Indian feeling in the English rejoicings.

as follows:—

It is only natural that our contemporary should feel a little mortified at the fact that in the Boer war the Indian soldiers have not been given an opportunity of evincing their loyalty and heroism, such as was afforded them on the occasion of the Soudan and Egyptian wars. But it is not natural or fair to think that in consequence of a few reverses sustained by the English during the earlier stages of the Boer war, they felt generously disposed towards the Indians, and that their recent victories will have the effect of making Englishmen unkind to the people of this country. Instead of that being the case, their discomfiture might have led the English to think that those among the Indians who desire disturbances would regard it as the beginning of England's misfortunes and feel reassured. A strong, healthy man is always forbearing and ready to show favour to the weak, while the weak and sickly are ever suspicious and incapable of acts of kindness. This is both natural and true. Boastfulness is a sign of weakness, and the disease has not yet affected the bone and marrow of Englishmen. In this war the English have realised their own strength, and have been able to make others realise it. America is well disposed towards them. Her own colonies are at this moment exceedingly attached to England. France, Germany, and Russia are extremely hostile to her, but even when Great Britain was denuded of two hundred thousand soldiers, none of them ventured to utter a word on behalf of the Boers. It did not behove our contemporary to pay attention to the sayings or doings of the *Englishman* newspaper, or of a few boasting and weak-minded persons bearing the English name and on the strength thereof to promulgate such an opinion regarding Englishmen generally. Has the boastful attitude of a few bad Englishmen so acutely pained our contemporary as to lead him to think that even the weakness of the empire is desirable? That there is unrest in a weak empire and the subject people are no gainers in any way, is being fully realised by the Chinese at this moment. The loyalty of the Indians is natural and placed upon a subtle and well-reasoned logical basis. That is why it is really established on strong foundations. That loyalty is not a "most ludicrous hypocrisy."

## II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

### (a)—Police.

9. The *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 19th June says that some Musalmans of the villages Chunia, Chengtha, Lokairpara, Baksar, and Lokalnagar, within the jurisdiction of the Gopalpur Ghatail outpost, in the Mymensingh district, are committing great oppressions on the innocent residents of the adjoining villages. No one dares to stand against them for fear of incurring their displeasure. The damage which is done by cattle belonging to these *badmashes* can be remedied by sending them to the pounds; but if any one ventures to do so, he is persecuted by them in various ways. The Subdivisional Officer of Tangail is requested not to depend on the local police, but to make secret enquiries of the respectable residents of the villages Sialkhol, Panchtikri, Pala, Sungaliapara, and Jamuria, or of the pleaders of the Pingana Munsif's Court in this matter, and give relief to the innocent villagers.

*Badmashes* in certain villages in the Mymensingh district.

CHARU MIHIR,  
June 19th, 1900.



DAINIK SAMACHAR,  
June 21st, 1900.

10. The *Dainik Samachar* [Calcutta] of the 21st June does not think that the Calcutta Police discharged its duty properly. The police in the tramway case. in the investigation of the tramway assault case. The occurrence took place on the morning of the 12th June last, and the police, having finished its investigation, placed the accused before the Magistrate at 10 A. M. the day following. The charge against the accused was one of murder, and no other charge requires a more careful investigation, because the evidence in such a case is liable to be put to the most crucial test at the hands of barristers at the Sessions Court, and the accused gets the benefit of the doubt and is released on the slightest suspicion of the accuracy of the evidence put forward. But even in a case of so serious a nature, the police, in the present instance, finished its investigation within twenty-four hours in a locality where hundreds of persons were coming and going every moment, making it difficult to ascertain who were the real witnesses. The police put forward for the prosecution only the witnesses whom the accused's relatives produced as eye-witnesses of the occurrence. It is clear that the police were in a hurry to finish the investigation. The names of the persons who were present in the car in which the occurrence took place were, it is said, taken down by the police; but they were not required to give their evidence.

Was information sent to the deceased's father that the case was to come up before the Magistrate on the 13th June? As everybody believes that the matters deposed to by Dr. Gibbons are of an improbable nature, he should be very carefully cross-examined.

MIHIR-O-SUDHAKAR,  
June 22nd, 1900.

11. The *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* [Calcutta] of the 22nd June writes as follows about the Patuakhali case:—  
The police in the Patuakhali case. Such fearful news is received from time to time as sends a shiver through the heart. What a disgrace! It must be a shame and a reproach if cases of oppression, such as were rare even under Musalmam rule, should occur under the powerful and civilised British Government. The English know how to honour the sex; every Englishman is ready to see that no disrespect is shown to women. It is therefore really impossible that women should be oppressed in territories administered by the English nation. It is certainly a matter of wonder that the reproach resulting from the oppression of women has not yet been removed from the empire of that nation which once blamed the French people for their failure to unsheathe ten thousand swords to save one woman from insult and disrespect.

SAMAY,  
June 22nd, 1900.

12. The *Samay* [Calcutta] of the 22nd June says that some time ago it was heard that a huge deception had been practised on the Port Commissioners of Calcutta, in which they had been cheated of some thirty-five or thirty-six thousand rupees. It was said that the amount had been taken out as the price of goods which had never been delivered to the Commissioners. A petty native clerk is said to have first discovered that there was something wrong in the papers. He reported the matter to his immediate native superior, who, in his turn, drew the attention of his superior officer to it. But the latter paid very little heed, and the matter was hushed up for the time. Subsequently, however, either on an examination of the goods in stock in the godown or by some other chance, it was detected that a deception had really been practised. Goods which had never come into the godown had actually been paid for. The police were informed, and able and distinguished police officers took up the investigation. But, it is said, that the investigation was given up as soon as it transpired that the officer whose duty it was to examine the goods in the godown was a European, and that he had a patron in a highly-placed officer. A man digging the earth has to stop as soon as he comes upon a piece of stone, which is too hard for his spade. Did the police find themselves in a similar situation in conducting this investigation?

It is certain that the swindlers were in collusion with somebody in the office. Some native clerks, it is said, have been dismissed. But, if these men are the real offenders, why have they not been prosecuted? This is rather suspicious.



13. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 22nd June, writes as follows:—

HITAVADI,  
June 22nd, 1900.

Zamindari co-operation in the suppression of crime.

Government has, at length, sought the help and co-operation of the zamindars in the matter of suppressing crime in the country. Both the zamindars and the people have much to say in this connection.

Long before the introduction of the permanent settlement, the zamindars, jagirdars, and others connected with the land possessed extensive administrative and judicial powers. They were held responsible for the maintenance of the public peace. After the introduction of the permanent settlement, however, the British Government deprived them of all such powers, and itself undertook the task of administering the country, maintaining peace, and dispensing justice. A police force was organised, and a tax was imposed on the people for meeting the cost. New laws were passed for facilitating the work of administration, and in the eye of the law the Brahman and the Chandal, the millionaire and the pauper were placed on a position of equality. It now became possible for the lowest village pariah to harass and humiliate the Brahman head of Hindu society and send him to jail and for the poorest village mukhtar to cause trouble to the most powerful owner of extensive zamindaris. The police was made all-in-all. The respectable classes were deprived of all powers. By the introduction of the new arrangements the lower classes became gainers, and the higher class losers, for the time being. But it is now found that nobody, high or low, need fear the police if he can spend money freely. The constitution of the police is really wonderful. The Superintendent possesses no knowledge of the country and its people or of laws and usages. He has come to this country only to make money, and he returns home after obtaining credit for vigorous administration. The police officer is much like the goddess *Kali*, who has two of her hands lifted for the purposes of striking down the wicked and the other two so extended as to assure those who can propitiate her that they have nothing to fear. This is why the people shudder to hear the name of the police, and believe that there is nothing which the police cannot do. This is why the people are always anxious to secure, in the first place, their own safety and in the next the safety of their friends and relatives. Hence it is that instead of helping the police, they always try to frustrate the attempts of the police to bring offenders to justice. The people of this country have always believed in and feared ghosts. Thanks to British rule, ghosts no longer trouble the people. But the police has now taken the place of ghosts. A class of people has also come into existence who exorcise the police just as the *Ojhas* exorcised ghosts in ancient times. Mukhtars, vakils, barristers, forgers, cheats and suborned witnesses—these are the men who practise exorcism on the police at the present time.

Now, the zamindars will, as a matter of course, communicate to their *naibs* and *gomastas* the request that the police has made to them. But the zamindars are not bound to comply with the request. Government is preserving the public peace by depriving us of all our powers and saddling us with taxes. It is Government's fault, a shortcoming and neglect of duty on the part of its salaried officers that thefts and dacoities have increased in the country. Why should the zamindars and other influential men in the country go against their will to help the police? This is rude language, but it is true. We have nothing to do in any matter; we are worthless in every respect; we live only to pay taxes and *salaam* to the Europeans we come across in public places. Why, then, this unreasonable demand upon us? Your law provides for punitive police, special constable, and many other things. The subject bears everything submissively, knows how to bear everything, and bears everything because he cannot help bearing everything. But why should he come forward voluntarily or as the result of friendly invitation, to increase police oppression? Why should the villagers and zamindars' servants be participators in a wrong act by helping the police in the arrest of a person, if that person is considered by them to be innocent? Either say clearly that the co-operation of the people in the administration of the country is in every way and at all times desirable, and that therefore competent natives should be given rights and privileges for which they may be fit, or let the all-powerful British Government ignore the natives and do just as it pleases. It is not proper that you should, in the matter of local self-government, most



capriciously kick the native away and honour him with a shake of the hand when you find yourselves floundering.

Such are the thoughts which constantly exercise the public mind, and we have given expression to them because we feel it would be well for Government to be made acquainted with the same.

HITAVADI,  
June 22nd, 1900.

14. The same paper is sorry and astonished to hear that two petitions have been submitted to the Third Munsif of Narayanganj, in the Dacca district, against a police Sub-Inspector of the place. One of the petitions purports to say that the Sub-Inspector committed various oppressions on the petitioner, and, having threatened to commit more if money were not paid, extorted forty rupees from him. A complaint of this nature is seldom heard of. Sub-Inspectors of Police even now occasionally extort money by committing oppression; but complaints against them in the Civil Courts have never been heard of. It is not clear why the Sub-Inspector in question has not been proceeded against criminally.

HITAVADI.

15. The same paper has received the following communication from Pursura in the Hooghly district:—

A cooly case.

A certain Kayastha resident of our village, about a month ago, enticed away my daughter, Khanta Bagdini, from my house. She was made over to an *arkati* and has since been sent up to the Barsapari tea-garden in the Golaghat subdivision of the Sibsagar district of Assam. I learnt all this first in a letter written by my daughter and subsequently from other persons.

I am a poor Bagdi and have to maintain a large family with my day's wages as a labourer. I am not in circumstances to spend anything in order to have my daughter back. But she will certainly soon die, if she has to work as a cooly in the tea-garden, because she is not accustomed to hard work. O Heavens! was this fate reserved for me!!

BHUT NATH BAGDI.

Will the mournful cry of Bhut Nath reach the ears of the authorities? Will they not see how the cooly law has made unhappy many ignorant men in this country? It is to be hoped that Bhut Nath's cries will attract the notice of the Chief Commissioner of Assam.

HITAVADI.

16. A correspondent of the same paper complains that a wild beast has become a terror to the residents of the villages Keorsar, Mahakali, Nahapara and Ranadu in the Munshiganj Subdivision of the Dacca district. It has already killed three or four children, and has wounded seven or eight adult people. The Deputy Magistrate of Munshiganj is requested to take steps to put a stop to these ravages.

A wild animal in the Munshiganj Subdivision of the Dacca district.

HITAVADI.

17. The same paper has received from a correspondent the facts of the Patuakhali case, as they have come to the knowledge of the Subdivisional Officer from the statements made by the complainants, in which complaints of rape have been made against some Police Officers of the place. After giving the facts, the editor writes as follows:—

The charge of rape against the Patuakhali policemen.

However serious the charges against the Police Officers may be, those charges, so far, are only the version of one party. What the authorities are requested to do in connection with this case, is to make a thorough investigation, bring every fact before the court, and see that no one influences any of the witnesses by threats, &c. It will be a discredit to the authorities concerned if a charge of this nature is hushed up or is not brought home to the accused for want of evidence. On the other hand, if the accused persons are found really innocent, condign punishment should be dealt out to the conspirators who have brought this false charge against them. In any case, a thorough investigation is necessary.



18. The *Prabhat* [Calcutta] of the 27th June gives a number of recent

The Indian police.

cases against the police in the different provinces, and, after referring to the alleged charge of rape which has been brought against some police officers of Patuakhali, in the Backergunge district, and to what is considered to be the corrupt and despotic nature of the Indian police generally, writes as follows:—

\* PRABHAT.  
June 27th, 1900.

Is there no means of putting down this serious evil? The Government may say that it can do nothing. It may say that a police officer who does anything wrong is punished whenever his guilt is brought home to him, that the *Kotwal* of Lucknow, though a Rai Bahadur, was punished for his offence; that the guilty police officers in Amritsar were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment; and that the accused police officers in Poona are under trial, and the charge against the Patuakhali officers is under investigation. Still, we cannot admit that Government has done everything it can do to put down police oppression. At one time, employés in other departments of the administration were as bad as police officers still are. Judicial officers, for instance, used to receive bribes, and failure of justice was, therefore, of frequent occurrence. But judicial officers are now free from that fault. There are good officers in the Police Department, too, but the department as a whole is so full of faults, simply because police officers were not carefully recruited in the past. The Europeans in the department were mostly uneducated or ill-educated men, who entered the Service through the influence of some relative in high office or other patron. And the selection of native officers, too, was not more strict or careful. As a matter of fact, no importance was attached to the education and character of the selected men. And the result of all this is the present condition of the department; instead of being preservers of the peace, police officers have become oppressors of the people; instead of putting down oppression, they have themselves become the oppressors, and at times, strike the people dumb by their misdoings. It is but a short time since an examination was introduced both in England and in India for the recruitment of Assistant Superintendents of Police. Examinations should also be introduced for the recruitment of all other police officers from District Superintendents down to constables. The pay of all police officers should be slightly increased, and none but educated men should be given employment in the department. The character of the police will gradually improve, if none but graduates of the University are appointed as Inspectors and Assistant Superintendents. Considering the present *morale* of the police, Government should shake off its lethargy in the matter. It is fully conscious of the fact that any oppression committed by the police brings discredit to itself.

The police is maintained at the cost of the very people on whom it commits oppression. But the poor and timid people of India do not understand this. They think that the power of the police is unbounded, that it can do as it likes. They never care to enquire who pays the police. The police, on its part, thinks that it is paid by the Government, that it is impossible for a poor people like the Indians to pay for its services. This misconception ought to be removed. Police oppression will not stop, so long as educated men are not employed in the department and the unfounded pride of the police is not put down. So long as oppression by the police is not checked, the discredit such oppression brings upon the Government will not be removed. The Government should, therefore, of its own motion, take steps to reform the police. It will not be good for the Government if stories of police oppression constantly go about the country.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

19. The *Dacca Prakash* [Dacca] of the 17th June has the following:—

DACCA PRAKASH,  
June 17th, 1900.

Separation of judicial from executive functions.

An impartial administration of justice presumably becomes difficult when the executive officer is called upon to exercise judicial powers. If the officer investigating a criminal case is also the officer who is subsequently required to try the accused, he generally forms an opinion adverse to the



defence; and as a consequence of that opinion he punishes the accused and there is miscarriage of justice. Cases occasionally occur which illustrate the truth of this remark. The agitation set on foot by the late Mr. Manmohun Ghosh against the existing arrangements for the administration of criminal justice is being vigorously conducted by the Congress. What the Congress wants is that as the union of judicial and executive functions in the hands of one and the same officer very often leads to miscarriage of justice, Government should place the task of enquiry and investigation in criminal cases in the hands of one class of officers and require another class of officers to try such cases, or in other words the procedure for the trial of all criminal cases should be that which is now followed in the trial of sessions cases in which the Magistrate is only the investigating officer and the trial of the accused is held by the judge with the help of a jury.

We cannot say we are wholly opposed to the reform suggested by the Congress, nor can we say that the existing arrangements do not occasionally lead to miscarriage of justice. We remember the oppression that was committed on Maharaja Suryya Kanta by the late Mr. Phillips. But we also know of cases which tell against the proposed reform. In not a few instances cases are decided by the Sessions Courts in a way that renders suppression of crime a matter of extreme difficulty. The Sessions Judge depends on evidence and is guided by law and precedents. Now, all these are constantly changing. The witnesses, who before the Magistrate, clearly testified to the guilt of the accused and whom he found no reason to disbelieve, very often, when the case is before the Sessions Judge, so clearly contradict themselves or make statements so full of glaring discrepancies that the case for the prosecution is completely demolished. Not being based on a knowledge of the true condition of the country, the law is necessarily marked by many defects, while the daily changing rulings and precedents constitute a source of still greater uncertainty. It is everybody's experience that there is very often failure of justice in sessions trials. The recent trial of a murder case in the Dacca sessions may be referred to as an instance in point. The man who was brought up as the defendant in the case was, according to the witnesses, the leader of thirty-two gangs of dacoits, and though there were frequent thefts and dacoities in the part of the country where he lived, he had not been, before that time, arrested as a bad character. In the present case his own brother-in-law, his wife and other relations were produced as witnesses for the prosecution. The brother-in-law was one of the accomplices, but he was made Queen's evidence. There was also another man who had made a confession but the police made the brother-in-law and not that man Queen's evidence. The confessions of two of the accused and the corroborative evidence given by the wife and other relations of the principal defendant led everybody to conclude that the man was guilty, but a ruling was discovered in which it had been laid down that "if an accomplice is made Queen's evidence and if he does not admit his own guilt, the defendant cannot be punished on his evidence." So, on the strength of this precedent, the confessions of the accused and the corroborative evidence of the witnesses were all set at naught, and in utter disregard of the atrocious murder that had been committed the court let off the hardened villain whose offence had been clearly established. Such, indeed, is the way the Sessions Court dispenses justice, and it is because offenders go unpunished under the existing system that crime is increasing in the country at a rapid rate. The question is, is it the intention of the law, the rulings, and the well-wishers of the country to favour that increase?

In the great majority of the cases which the Magistrate commits to the sessions, he entertains no doubt whatever about the guilt of the accused, and only such of the witnesses are produced before the sessions court as appear to him to have given true evidence. The witnesses, as a rule, live in the same village with the accused, and not unoften are his friends and relations. When their evidence in the lower court is such as may lead to the conviction of the accused, various means are used to tamper with them with the result that in the Sessions Court they make statements the very opposite of those made previously. This accounts for the discharge of the accused in a large number of cases. Thanks to such law and precedents, it is impossible to obtain con-



viction except in cases in which the defendant is too poor to pay for good counsel. Under these circumstances, if the system of summary trial is abolished and a system is introduced such as obtains in sessions trials, suppression of crime will be rendered impossible. If executive officers visit the place of occurrence and take down the depositions of witnesses at a time when they do not expect such visits and are quite unprepared to give their evidence, it is extremely probable that the true facts of a case will come to light. It is only when one's dear and near relations find themselves taken by surprise and called upon to give evidence by an officer like the Magistrate who possesses great power and prestige that they give their depositions. They would never come forward voluntarily to give evidence if they knew that their evidence would put any of their relatives to the risk of being hanged. And yet there are many cases which cannot stand unless supported by the evidence of such witnesses. A husband who sees a man committing adultery with his wife kills him on the spot and the wife is probably the only witness of the crime. If the Magistrate records her deposition at the time, she will probably speak the truth, although it may go against her husband. But when, after a time, she comes to learn that she will be perfectly undone if, as the result of this case, her husband is hanged, she will not certainly speak to the occurrence. In great many cases of this kind, it is the Magistrate only before whom the true facts are revealed. Before any other person who does not possess executive power the case cannot go on, unless it is supported by the evidence of independent and disinterested witnesses. Such witnesses are very rarely found, and it is not always that offences are committed in the presence of such witnesses.

In ancient times both Hindu and Musalman rulers often disposed of complaints without taking evidence and looking only to the probabilities of a case and the character and antecedents of the parties. This made the punishment of the real offenders possible. Even at the present time Magistrates occasionally dispense justice on this method and punish real offenders. We do not say that they do not occasionally punish the innocent, too, but the Sessions Courts also are to blame for such punishment of the innocent. Very often the real offender appears as a witness and gets him, who is really a witness, hauled up before the court as the defendant and punished for an offence of which he is perfectly innocent.

Fatalists that we are, we do not believe that any particular person, or class of persons, is directly responsible for the doing of justice or injustice in a particular case. A man must suffer what he has been ordained to suffer. We cannot, therefore, admit that a separation of judicial and executive functions is all that is needed to render the administration of justice perfectly satisfactory. Still we do not blame those who are labouring to get this change introduced, nor do we see anything strange or unusual in the fact that many English Judges approve of the proposal. The latter consider the proposed separation good for this country, because the separation of executive and judicial powers has proved beneficial in England. But the circumstances of this country are different from those of England. Here criminal justice is mainly administered by Deputy Magistrates, the majority of whom are natives acquainted with the character and condition of the people. In the great majority of cases these officers do justice, although their decision may not be consonant with law and precedent.

What, however, is causing the greatest injury in connection with the administration of justice in this country has not as yet received the attention of either the Government or the educated community. The cause of this grievance is the ignorance of the vernaculars on the part of the Judicial Officers. They do not understand either the parties or the witnesses, and yet decide their cases. This often leads to failure of justice.

The Congress have referred to certain instances in which magisterial officers misused their powers as proving the desirability of separating executive from judicial functions. But hundreds of cases can be adduced to show that such misuse of power is not the result of the union of those different functions in the hands of one and the same officer. In all quarrels between a native and a European (the latter need not be a powerful person or an official), the judges do injustice more than the Magistrates.



CHART MIMSA,  
June 19th, 1900.

20. The *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 19th June has the following:—

Babu Fakir Chand Chatterji, Subdivisional Officer of Tangail. The arbitrary proceedings of Babu Fakir Chand Chatterji, Subdivisional Officer of Tangail, in the Mymensingh district, are gradually exceeding all reasonable limits. Some time ago, in a case under section 145, Criminal Procedure Code, he caused a person to be arrested under a warrant and sent him to *hajai* for non-appearance. On the Mafeking day, when all Government offices were closed, Fakir Chand Babu decided the following cases in his private quarters in the absence of the parties:—

- (1) *Fahiran Bibi versus Makaramali Shaik*—a case under section 488, Criminal Procedure Code; struck off for non-appearance of the prosecutrix.
- (2) *Mafizuddin versus Abdul Rasan Miam*—a case under section 488, Indian Penal Code; dismissed under section 203, Criminal Procedure Code, for non-appearance of the complainant.
- (3) *Chandra Nath Guha versus Keramat Shaik*—accused acquitted under section 247, Criminal Procedure Code, for non-appearance of the complainant.
- (4) *Empress versus Azim Shaik*—charged under section 19 of Act IX of 1870, fined Rs. 10, in default two weeks' imprisonment, after taking the evidence of six witnesses.

Fakir Babu must be a very bold man, seeing that, although a Government servant, he has disregarded the order of the Government. We request Mr. A. C. Sen, the District Judge of Mymensingh, to call for the records in the above cases and do justice to the aggrieved parties.

SRI SRI VISHNU  
PRIYA-O-  
ANANDA BAZAR  
PATRIKA,  
June 20th, 1900.

21. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 20th June has the following with reference to

Sarat Chandra Chakravarti's case. Sarat Chandra Chakravarti's case:—

One Mr. Gomez, who came to give evidence in the Police Court in connection with the above case, is an old acquaintance of Augustine, and he plainly admitted before the Magistrate that he had come forward as a witness at Augustine's request. Durga Prasad, a jamadar, in the employ of the Tramways Company, deposed that the conductor of the car informed him of the occurrence, and that Sarat was dead when he went to the place of occurrence, and that the accused confessed before the police that he had murdered Sarat. He also said that he did not see Gomez on the spot. A Bengali who was tendered as a witness was not allowed to depose. What is all this? Dr. Gibbons, the Police Surgeon, said in his evidence that the deceased's heart was very large and its ventricle was extended; that the deceased was suffering from heart disease and that the fright occasioned by the quarrel caused his death. No credit is due to Dr. Gibbons for discovering the cause of Sarat Chandra's death. In this country, whenever there is a quarrel between a European and a native, the native always dies either from rupture of the spleen or from heart disease. It is an axiomatic truth that the blacks can never die from the effects of blows received from Europeans or Eurasians. We cannot, therefore, praise Dr. Gibbons either for his discovery or for his knowledge of pathology or medical jurisprudence. It would appear from Dr. Gibbons' evidence as if Sarat had been for a long time suffering from eccentric hypertrophy of the cardiac ventricle. There ought to be a careful enquiry as to whether the symptoms generally developed by patients suffering from this disease were also present in the case of Sarat Chandra. The accused has been charged under section 304 of the Indian Penal Code on the evidence of Dr. Gibbons and one or two other witnesses, and has been enlarged on bail. There are discrepancies in the evidence given by Jogendra Nath Sadhu in the Coroner's Court and that of Mr. Gomez. Jogendra Nath said that it was Augustine who first struck Sarat. When Augustine wanted to cross-examine this witness, the Coroner said that it was better for him to remain silent, as the charge was not proved against him in his Court. Mr. B. M. Chatterji, Barrister-at-law, requested the Coroner, on behalf of the father of the



deceased, to postpone the enquiry, in order to enable him to produce other witnesses, whose names had been submitted to the Police Court. But the Coroner rejected the prayer and in his charge to the jury said that it was clear from the evidence of Dr. Gibbons that Sarat had died of heart disease. The jury at first seemed to be in doubt as to their verdict, but afterwards expressed the same opinion as the Coroner. Mr. B. M. Chatterji submitted the names of some eye-witnesses of the occurrence to the Commissioner of Police and requested him to summon them. Mr. James told him in reply that if it was found on enquiry that these men were actually present on the spot at the time of the occurrence, he would summon them. The Commissioner of Police ought to make the enquiry himself instead of entrusting it to any of his subordinates.

22. With reference to the case in which a man was sentenced to six months' imprisonment by Mr. Jarbo, Deputy Magistrate of Midnapore, for begging in the house of the Magistrate of the district (see Report on Native Papers for 2nd June, paragraph 12), the same paper says that an appeal was made to the District Magistrate, on behalf of the mendicant, but the Magistrate has upheld the order of the Deputy Magistrate. This shows how very generous a man the District Magistrate of Midnapore is.

SRI SRI VISHNU  
PRIYA-O-  
ANANDA BAZAR  
PATRIKA,  
June 20th, 1900.

23. The same paper has the following:—

Mr. Hamilton on the Bengali press. In the Lopez case, Mr. Hamilton not only gave proof of his foolhardiness, prejudice, and ignorance of the law, but also acted as a coward by refusing to supply the editor of the *Khulna* with a copy of his judgment. According to the circular orders of the High Court, he was bound to supply a copy, but he refused it. The remark made by Mr. Hamilton in refusing the prayer of the editor of *Khulna* will show the nature of his education and breeding, and the character of the society in which he moves. He wrote:—

SRI SRI VISHNU  
PRIYA-O-  
ANANDA BAZAR  
PATRIKA.

The applicant is, I understand, the editor of the local paper here, which appears to be as scurrilous, libellous, and indecent as native papers usually are. Before granting his application let me advise him to improve the tone of his advertisement columns. They may contain just such stuff as the Bengali mind loves to feed on, but no self-respecting journal should allow itself to pander to such debased and bestial tastes.

These few lines are enough to prove that this Mr. Hamilton is a raw youth of a strongly vindictive nature, that he possesses a knack of slandering greater even than that of Swift, Macaulay, and Stevens; and that he is completely devoid of the faculty of judgment. Will not our respected Lieutenant-Governor do a service to the country by putting this boy in his proper place?

24. With reference to Sarat Chandra Chakravarti's case, the *Basumati* [Calcutta] of the 21st June has the following:—

BASUMATI,  
June 21st, 1900.

The tramway case. The Coroner in his charge to the jury said:—  
“You, gentlemen, have heard the evidence of Dr. Gibbons. He said that the man died of heart disease, and you would be perfectly justified in bringing in a verdict of death from heart disease.”

The jury were at first undecided, but afterwards gave a unanimous verdict of death from heart disease. Let us all cry, Hari! Hari! So long it was the spleen that was ruptured.

25. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 21st June says that Mr. Hamilton, the Mr. Hamilton in the *Khulna* case. Magistrate of *Khulna*, made the following remarks on the application of the Editor of the *Khulna* to be supplied with a copy of his judgment in the *Khulna* case:—

SANJIVANI,  
June 21st, 1900.

The applicant is, I understand, the editor of the local paper here, which appears to be as scurrilous, libellous, and indecent as native papers usually are. Before granting his application let me advise him to improve the tone of his advertisement columns. They may contain just such stuff as the Bengal mind loves to feed on, but no self-respecting journal should allow itself to pander to such debased and bestial tastes.



Mr. Hamilton has called all native newspapers scurrilous, libellous, and indecent, and the Bengalis as men of bestial tastes. With the permission of the Government any Bengali can bring a defamation case against Mr. Hamilton. Sir John Woodburn is known to be just, and is therefore expected to deal out condign punishment to Mr. Hamilton for such improper conduct.

SAMAY,  
June 22nd, 1900.

26. The *Samay* [Calcutta] of the 22nd June writes as follows:—

Mr. Hamilton in the Khulna case.

We have not yet heard the last of the Khulna case. Our readers know by this time that though Purna Chandra was insulted without cause by Mrs. Lopez and brought a complaint against her in a law court, owing to Mr. Hamilton's interference, he obtained no redress; nay, was himself departmentally fined twenty rupees by that very kind-hearted and impartial Magistrate. Purna Chandra petitioned Mr. Hamilton for a remission of the fine. Mr. Hamilton sent for Purna and told him to confess the truth frankly. Purna replied that not a word of the charge he had brought against Mrs. Lopez was untrue. Mr. Hamilton again told him to consider well and tell the truth. Well, this meant that if Purna wanted a remission of his fine, he was to tell a lie under the order of his superior officer. Under the circumstances, it is idle for Purna to expect any redress of his wrong, unless the Lieutenant-Governor has his attention drawn to his case.

Mr. Hamilton also passed the following order on the application of the Editor of the *Khulna* for a copy of the judgment in the case:—

The applicant is, I understand, the editor of the local paper here, which appears to be as scurrilous, libellous, and indecent as native papers usually are. Before granting his application, let me advise him to improve the tone of his advertisement columns. They may contain just stuff that the Bengali mind loves to feed on, but no self-respecting journal should allow itself to pander to such debased and bestial tastes.

The Government should judge whether a Magistrate, who, in his official capacity, can use such language, ought to be kept for a moment in a responsible and honourable post. Not content with abusing the *Khulna* newspaper, Mr. Hamilton has abused the whole vernacular press as "scurrilous, libellous and indecent." And not satisfied even with that, he has abused the whole Bengali people as possessed of a "debased and bestial taste." If Government gives its permission, any Bengali can teach Mr. Hamilton a lesson in a criminal Court. In calling others libellous, Mr. Hamilton has been himself guilty of the grossest libel. The above remarks show what Mr. Hamilton thinks of the people placed under his charge; and he has not hesitated to express his opinion publicly. We anxiously await Sir John Woodburn's orders in the case.

SAMAY.

27. The same paper fails to see the cause of the delay which took place

The Coroner's inquest in Sarat Chandra Chakravarti's case.

in the holding of an inquest by the Coroner of Calcutta in Sarat Chandra Chakravarti's case. The inquest, instead of being held, as it was, after the magisterial enquiry, ought to have been finished before it. Can any body explain the cause of the anomalous procedure followed in this case?

Then, the Coroner's charge to the jury and his manner of asking the jurors about their verdict were extremely objectionable. He distinctly told the jurors what verdict they should bring in, although they were men of education and common sense, who could have themselves arrived at a reasonable conclusion in the matter. Considering the race-feeling which this case has excited in the town, the Coroner ought to have so acted as to keep himself above suspicion. But he did not do that, and people have grown suspicions and are questioning the impartiality of the inquest. He gave his charge to the jury without examining all the witnesses. He even hesitated to apply the word "accused" to Augustine. The police produced only two witnesses, and their evidence was worthless. Mr. B. M. Chatterji, Barrister-at-law, on behalf of the father of the deceased, asked the Coroner to postpone the inquest in order to enable him to produce more witnesses. But the Coroner, instead of granting his reasonable prayer, told him that he had no *locus standi* in the investigation that was going on. It would have been better to have held no inquest whatever, than to have held an inquest like this. The result of the memorial which the



deceased's father is said to have submitted to the Lieutenant-Governor is now awaited by the public.

The police, too, instead of showing any eagerness to collect all available evidence, closed their investigation after securing only two witnesses. It is for Mr. James to consider what feeling this conduct of the police is likely to excite in the public mind.

Though the native press has written so much on the objectionable points in the Coroner's inquest, it is strange that the Anglo-Indian press is completely silent on the subject.

28. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 22nd June has the following on the Sarat Chandra Chakravarti's case of Sarat Chandra Chakravarti:—

HITAVADI,  
June 22nd, 1900.

#### THE POST-MORTEM EXAMINATION.

The people of this country have a sort of prejudice against medical practitioners. Although there are hundreds of doctors who possess a god-like character, people still believe that if a small payment is made or a fee or the price of a visit is paid, and provided there is no risk of detection, there is nothing that a doctor is incapable of doing. People believe that it is not hard to procure a medical certificate if only you can pay for it. But, then, Mr. Gibbons is a doctor and a European to boot, and every sensible man will say that nobody should entertain such an opinion regarding him. We, too, admit that neither under the temptation of a bribe nor under the influence of an undue race-partiality will a man of position like Dr. Gibbons say anything that is unrighteous. But then he is not infallible, nor are his conclusions unassailable. Consequently we cannot depend on the examination made by him alone, and keep ourselves quiet.

#### THE DOCTOR'S CONCLUSION.

Even if Dr. Gibbons' opinion that the deceased's heart was weak and diseased be accepted as correct, our suspicions are not removed. None of his friends and relatives had up to this time the least knowledge that the deceased had been suffering from a fearful heart disease. He served in an office and daily walked the whole distance, about four to five miles from his lodgings in Nawabdi Ostagar's Lane, to Dharamtollah and back. We do not think it is possible for a man suffering from heart disease to do this long distance on foot every day. This is, at any rate, opposed to common sense. The *post-mortem* examination in this case would have been more satisfactory if instead of being held by Dr. Gibbons alone it had been jointly conducted by four or five doctors.

#### IN THE CORONER'S COURT.

Only two witnesses, a Bengali Babu and a European, were produced by the police in the Coroner's Court. At the request of the deceased's father, a barrister informed the Coroner that as the names and addresses of some more witnesses had been obtained, his prayer was that the evidence of these additional witnesses might also be recorded. But he was rudely told by the Coroner—"You have no right to speak here. Stop, do not obstruct the enquiry."

#### THE CORONER.

This attitude of the Coroner has surprised many people. Mr. Dobbin is a barrister himself. He was for sometime in the service of Maharaja Jatindra Mohan Tagore, and in addition to his duties, as Coroner performs those of the Registrar of the Calcutta Small Cause Court. It is a matter of extreme regret and wonder that he has conducted himself in that way. When, in the course



of his deposition, the Bengali witness referred to the accused as "the accused," the Coroner rebuked the witness and told him to speak of him as "Mr. Augustine" and not as "the accused." Thus did Mr. Dobbin defend Mr. Augustine's honour.

#### THE END OF THE ENQUIRY.

The Coroner then enquired if there were any other witnesses, and was informed that there were three or four more. He then remarked that it was not necessary to take further evidence, and addressing the jury said: "It is clear that this man died of heart disease. That ought to be your verdict. But if you think otherwise, you are free to express that opinion." The jury would not agree as to their verdict for some time, but at length said, unanimously, that heart disease was the cause of death. So, there was an end of the matter.

The deceased's father was returning to his house from the Small Cause Court where he had gone on some business when the news of his son's tragic end was communicated to him by somebody in front of the *Hitavadi* office. The poor man fell down senseless on the ground. When he regained his senses and cried and asked "where is Sarat?" who could have the heart to tell him that his son had died of heart disease? If there had been anybody present there who had poetry in his heart, he would have shed tears and informed the sorrowing father that Sarat had gone to the country where there was no rupture of the spleen, no heart disease, no improper race favouritism; where the administration of justice was not marked by partiality, where disease and sorrow were unknown, and where there was a judge of judges and a punisher of those who inflicted punishments.

Let nobody think that, swayed by sentiment and imagination, we are presenting a distorted picture of a real occurrence. We know we are not infallible; that like Feringhees we, too, may be partial to our own kith and kin. This is why in describing such occurrences we conduct ourselves with great circumspection. We can fully realise the injury that would be done to us if we got ourselves mixed in race quarrels with the Feringhees. That we yet make all this agitation, is because we cherish an expectation of redress, and not because we are prompted by any hostile or vindictive feeling. This crying in the wilderness is sure to bear fruit some day or other. It is impossible for man to plant obstacles in the path of equity, justice, and *dharma*. The obstacles will get themselves removed, but for that result we shall have to hope and wait. If by our exertions and through our endeavours the attention of the authorities is directed to this matter, even this crying in the wilderness will not prove infructuous. Dinanath's grief for the loss of his son will not pass off, nor will Sarat's dead body be quickened to life. But in future in this British empire hundreds of Dinanaths will find consolation and hundreds of Sarats will find their lives saved. The Hindu Puranas speak of Dhruva's crying in the wilderness as having been rewarded with a sight of the god Narayan. How can we say that in this world our crying in the wilderness will not succeed in drawing the attention of the English people?

#### NOT TO BE BELIEVED.

It is feared by some that rupture of the spleen of former days will now make room for heart disease. Rupture of the spleen came into vogue from the time of the Fuller case, and heart disease comes into force from this Augustine case. What if the poor fellow had heart disease? In anger, fear, and excitement he did not die sitting. He had stood up to engage in a hand-to-hand fight with a European. Has Dr. Gibbons ever before seen such rashness in a weak patient? The man used to walk about, ride in a carriage, work in an office, and was about to engage in a hand-to-hand fight with a European, and yet there was this very, very small interval between life and death! A statement like this would be tardily believed even if it came from *Dhanwantari* (the god of the healing art) himself, not to speak of Dr. Gibbons. The ripe palm would have fallen from the tree in its own proper time; the touch of the crow's



feet only served as the accelerating cause. Still you cannot deny that, but for the European's blow, Sarat would have lived for some time longer? Is not the causing of such death punishable under the law?

#### WHOLLY IMPROBABLE.

The version of the occurrence believed by the Coroner is wholly improbable. The Bengali does not laugh at a European for any impropriety in his dress. The ordinary Bengali is acquainted with the hat and the coat, and is now making the acquaintance of beating too. He does not amuse himself by commenting on the faults of dress in a European. Even if he feels amused, he never allows himself the use of such expressions as "Dog, I am laughing at you." Nor would he indulge in such language and follow it up with a beating. This makes it clear that the version of the occurrence given by the assaulter is wholly false. There is, again, the bias shown in favour of the accused by the Feringhees at every step. Take, in the first place, the newspaper reports. Perhaps not one Feringhee reporter has given the true facts of the case. The Coroner saw no necessity for calling additional witnesses. The two witnesses differed as to who struck first, and yet the Coroner did not feel ashamed to say that he did not want any more witnesses. The accused's case was brought before the Police Court even before the Coroner's enquiry was held! The Coroner did not find an opportunity to view the dead body, and yet a regular verdict was recorded as to the cause of death, and the enquiry that was held was held as if to save appearances. Has anybody heard of any such enquiry in any other country? Is it necessary to say explicitly what the public think of all this? Just once think what the consequences would have been if instead of a European killing a black native, a black native had killed a European. Then where was the necessity of the Coroner giving such instructions to the jury as he did give them? Supposing the European to have been unjustly charged with the offence, and Sarat's death was brought about by natural causes, why did the Coroner suggest to the jury what their verdict should be? Why did he try to explain to them beforehand that death had resulted from natural causes? Why did he, again, express joy when he heard their verdict? Considering the series of muddles which have been perpetrated in this case, public anxiety will not be removed unless a regular trial or enquiry is held in this matter. If this is the way in which judicial trials must be held, people will find it difficult and hazardous to live in the British empire. The sight of a white man will henceforward be dreaded as that of a bugbear. By-and-by the sight of a European will come to produce that fear in men's minds which is produced by the sight of vicious and ferocious wild animals, with this difference, however, that it will be hard and troublesome even to entertain the idea of killing, capturing or punishing a white animal. People's confidence in law and law courts will disappear, and everybody will do as he may think best for the purpose of self-defence, retaliation, and safety. We can never consider such a state of things desirable, and that is why we make our feelings known to the authorities.

29. The same paper has the following:—

The Second Munsif of Narayanganj.

Why are we receiving various sorts of letters against the Second Munsif of Narayanganj, in the Dacca district? Is it true that the Munsif abuses witnesses? A correspondent says: "A respectable man who went to the Munsif's Court as a witness was very much insulted by being called 'stupid' by the Munsif. The gentleman has served a notice on the Munsif with the object of bringing a suit for damages against him."

What is the matter in Narayanganj? It is difficult to believe that a judicial officer, and specially a Munsif, could so far forget his position as to conduct himself in the manner the Second Munsif of that place is reported to have done.

30. The same paper has heard it for the first time, in connection

The Magistrate of Khulna.

with the Khulna case, that copies of court papers are not to be supplied for publication in the newspapers. In a criminal case, after the hearing is finished, not only a newspaper editor, but anybody and everybody can get copies of the papers

HITAVADI,  
June 22nd, 1900.

HITAVADI.



on payment of the prescribed fees. None but the Magistrate of Khulna can say why he did not conform to this rule. The writer is anxious to see the decision of the High Court in the matter.

More serious things than the refusal of copies of the papers to the editor of the *Khulna* are being said against Mr. Hamilton. It is stated that in his judgment he had abused the editors of native newspapers and even the whole Bengali race. But, subsequently, for some unknown reason, he retracted the abuse. The truth, however, cannot be ascertained so long as duly certified copies of the papers connected with the case are not available. Indiscretions are certain to be committed at every step by hot-tempered young men so long as Government sees fit to appoint them to posts of grave responsibility.

PRATIVASI,  
June 25th, 1900.

31. The *Prativasi* [Calcutta] of the 25th June has the following:—

Sarat Chandra's case.

One Fakir Singh slapped Raman Kahar on the face, and this caused the death of Raman. A *post-mortem* examination showed that the man died from pneumonia, but the Sub-divisional Officer of Jamui, in the Monghyr district, placed no reliance on the opinion of the doctor. Mr. Rogers, the Civil Surgeon, said:—"The man has died from natural causes. I cannot understand why the body was sent for *post-mortem* examination." Even this has not removed doubt from the mind of the Magistrate. Fakir is in *hajaj* and is being tried. We would not have referred to this case, if the Police Magistrate of Calcutta had not placed sole reliance on the unreasonable evidence of Dr. Gibbons and had tried to ascertain the true cause of Sarat Chandra's death. From the evidence, it is seen that Sarat Chandra fought with Augustine. A single blow from Augustine did not cause his death. It is impossible to believe that a man who had walked three miles and fought with Augustine for a long time was more dead than alive? It would have been difficult for Dr. Gibbons to retain his diploma if he had expressed this opinion in any other country. An opinion like this, that has been expressed by Dr. Gibbons can be expressed only before the people of this country.

(c)—Jails.

DACCA PRAKASH,  
June 24th, 1900.

32. The *Dacca Prakash* of the 24th June has the following remarks on jail administration in Bengal during 1898-99:—

Jail administration during 1898-99.

(1) Notwithstanding the absence of distress from the country during the year under notice, the number of prisoners in jails during that year exceeded the number of prisoners in the preceding year by 2,000. Increase of prisoners in years of scarcity is set down by Government to the account of the prevailing distress. But how will Government account for the increase of prisoners during the year under review? For ourselves, we know that this increase of prisoners is due to the Hindu's loss of faith in his religion in consequence of the preaching of Christianity and the spread of western education.

(2) A statement regarding prisoners, according to the different creeds professed by them, will bear out our view. The number of prisoners per thousand of the three most important religious communities in the Bengal Presidency is, respectively, as follows:—"Hindu 439, Musalman 1576, and Christian 19184. Judging from this proportion, it would appear that the number of prisoners would have been four times as large as at present if the entire population of Bengal had by this time become converts to Christianity. And if Christian offenders were punished under the same circumstances as Hindus and Musalmans are punished the number of prisoners would be at least ten times as large. The increase in the number of Hindu prisoners is due to the teaching and example of the righteous Christians.

That the preaching of Christianity and the spread of western education are responsible for the increase of prisoners in the country, is also proved by the large number of persons sentenced to imprisonment in Calcutta, a place where the Christian influence is most strong, and where the number of criminals also is proportionately higher than in any other place in India. And the connection between education and crime will become clear from the fact that while the percentage of educated persons in the population taken as a whole, is only three, such percentage is as great as 10.57 among the jail population. What a sad effect of education in a country in which education formerly taught people to



abandon thrones and live in the forests without repining and to be content with food consisting of rotten leaves!

(3) A separate jail has been appointed in Bhagalpur for the safe custody of young female prisoners. But it is a point for consideration how such prisoners will be treated by their jail escorts when being taken to or from that jail. In spite of numerous facilities for *liaisons* with such prisoners, the higher jail officers are at present withheld, by considerations of their responsibility, from indulging in such intrigues to any considerable extent. But it will not be necessary for jail officers to be so cautious while escorting young female prisoners from or to the said jail.

(4) Jail mortality during the year under review was 31.21 per thousand. This proportion is far higher than the mortality outside jails. Another noteworthy difference between mortality within and without jails is that while the mortality outside jails is mainly confined to infants and old people, that within the jails affect only robust and young or middle-aged people. There is no one to prevent the cruelty which leads to the untimely deaths of so many people. The quality of food prescribed for prisoners is unsuited to people belonging to the respectable classes, and the result is that the majority of such people, when sent to jail, fall ill and die. A large quantity of provisions is also stolen by the jail officers.

(d)—Education.

33. The *Sansodhini* [Chittagong] of the 15th June says that the aid

SANSODHINI,  
June 15th, 1900.

The teachers of girls' schools.

given by the District Board to a girls' school is very small, being only Rs. 6 a month. A good teacher cannot be procured for this small sum, and consequently half-educated young men, without any experience in teaching, are employed to do the work. They do not come to the schools regularly, and there is nobody to superintend their work. Under these circumstances, it would be better to amalgamate the girls' schools with the middle English and middle vernacular schools. No one ought to be appointed a teacher in a girls' school, who has not read up to the first or second-year class of a normal school.

34. A correspondent of the *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* [Calcutta] of the 22nd June

MIHIR-O-SUDHAKAR,  
June 22nd, 1900.

Musalman students' messes in Calcutta.

draws attention to the miserable condition in which Musalman students, who have no home in Calcutta, live in this town. They generally establish their messes in dirty quarters like Chunum Gullee or Baitakkhana Bazar, in ill-lighted, ill-ventilated, insanitary houses which are kept in a filthy condition. The only servant in a mess is a maid-servant of questionable character, who does everything, including the cooking. The management of the affairs of a mess devolves each month, by rotation, on one of the inmates, who has to pay so much attention to this work that he is obliged to neglect his studies that month.

35. A correspondent of the *Hitavadi*, [Calcutta], of the 22nd June writes as follows:—

HITAVADI,  
June 22nd, 1900.

Mistakes in the published results of the last Entrance Examination.

In the list of junior scholarships for the present year, which was published in the first instance, the name of Siva Prasad Rai Chaudhuri of the Metropolitan Institution, Bowbazar Branch, appeared as that of the recipient of a third class scholarship. The name of Sanath Kumar Rai Chaudhuri of the same institution did not first appear in the list. Subsequently, however, it was ascertained that Sanath Kumar was entitled to a scholarship of Rs. 15 a month, and the name of the candidate who stood last in order of merit in the first list of scholarships for Calcutta had, therefore, to be removed from the list. Can the authorities form an idea of the shock which has been dealt to the mind of this boy by their action? As for Sanath Kumar, he would have got no scholarship had he not enquired about his marks in the office of the Director of Public Instruction.

Another boy, named Lalit Kumar Bhattacharyya, had passed the Entrance examination in the second division from the same school, but his name appeared in the *Calcutta Gazette* as that of one who had appeared from the Metropolitan Institution, Barabazar Branch. The head-master of the latter institution, on being written to, replied that no boy of the name of Lalit Kumar Bhattacharyya had appeared from his school.



The editor asks if the repetition of such mistakes every year is good for the prestige of the University.

(e)—*Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.*

PRATINIDHI,  
June 19th, 1900.

36. The *Pratinidhi* [Comilla] of the 19th June says that the Civil Surgeon of Comilla has reported that the health of Kasba, in the Tippera district, is being seriously affected by the tank Kalyan Sagar, and has, therefore, requested the District Board to re-excavate it at a cost of Rs. 16,000. If the health of the place is really being affected by the tank, the Maharaja of Tippera ought to re-excavate it. The District Board cannot properly spend such a large sum on this work.

CHARU MIHIR,  
June 19th, 1900.

37. The *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 19th June complains of water scarcity in the village Tangail, five miles distant from the Porabari steamer ghât, in the Mymensingh district. There are no wells or other water reservoirs within five miles of the village, and the residents have to walk a long distance to fetch drinking water.

BARISAL HITAIISHI,  
June 20th, 1900.

38. The *Barisal Hitaishi* [Barisal] of the 20th June requests the Barisal Municipality to remove the Musalman burial-ground from its present site, as the water-channel running along its northern side discharges itself into all the neighbouring tanks, the water of which is used by the residents. It will shortly be necessary to abandon the ground on account of its insufficiency.

The present burning ghât for Hindus should also be removed from its present site. The ghât has proved an obstacle to the extension of the town on the north and west. It was not advisable to make the ghât in a locality frequented by the public. There should be one ghât on the river side, north of the town, and another on its west on the Bagura field. It is also not right to bury the dead bodies of prisoners on the bank of the jail canal. Here dead bodies are often buried in graves not deeply dug, and jackals dig them out.

PRABHAT,  
June 27th, 1900.

39. The *Prabhat* [Calcutta] of the 27th June asks what purpose it serves to have the names of streets and lanes in Calcutta written on the signboards only in English. The names of the streets and lanes in the European quarter of the town ought to be written in English as well as Bengali, and those of the streets and lanes in the native quarter in Bengali and Nagri.

(g)—*Railways and communications including canals and irrigation.*

PRATINIDHI,  
June 19th, 1900.

40. The *Pratinidhi* [Comilla] of the 19th June says that a corpse was found near the Nainpur Railway Station on the Assam-Bengal Railway, within the railway fencing. The gatemen on this line are all local men, who stay at home and scarcely remain in the gate rooms. This accident would not have happened if the man in charge of the gate, near which the corpse was found, had remained in the gate room. These accidents may be avoided if residents of other districts are employed as gatemen in the place of these local men.

BURDWAN  
SANJIVANI,  
June 19th, 1900.

41. The *Burdwan Sanjivani* [Burdwan] of the 19th June says that there is no easy communication between Burdwan town and the village Rayna, in the Burdwan district. The Badshahi road from Burdwan to Rayna, constructed at the time of the Musalman rulers, is in a very deplorable condition for want of repairs, and becomes practically impassable during the rainy season. The District Board of Burdwan once proposed to construct a new road to Rayna, but nothing has as yet been done to carry out the proposal. The con-



struction of such a road has become urgently necessary. If the Government helps the District Board in this matter, and if subscriptions are raised from among the residents of Rayna, the Board will not have to spend much itself on this account. There are many influential zamindars and talukdars in the village who can help the Board in the matter. Rai Kalika Das Datta Bahadur C.I.F., a resident of the village Meral, within the jurisdiction of the Rayna thana, once offered Rs. 1,000 for the construction of a road. The District Magistrate is requested to call for the papers concerning this case from the Board's office, and see that the construction of such a road is taken in hand.

42. The *Medini Bandhav* [Midnapore] of the 20th June says that the Contai-Beldarbazar Road, in the Midnapore district,

MEDINI BANDHAV,  
June 20th, 1900.

A bad road in the Midnapore district.

is in a very deplorable condition. There are ruts in several places, and the road becomes practically impassable during the rainy season. The bridge near Khakurdar, between Sauri and Beldar, has collapsed, causing much inconvenience to passenger and cart traffic.

43. The *Sanjay* [Faridpur] of the 22nd June says that there is no easy communication between Faridpur and Madaripur, the principal subdivision of the district. Considering the large number of people who have to come to Faridpur, on business, every day, an extension of the railway line from Faridpur to Madaripur will prove a paying concern. The Lieutenant-Governor will soon visit Faridpur, and the people of Faridpur will be grateful to His Honour if he makes arrangements for this extension.

SANJAY,  
June 22nd, 1900.

An extension of the Faridpur Railway line.

(h)—General.

44. A correspondent writing in the *Medini Bandhav* [Midnapore] of the 20th June says that the mails reach the Danton post office at midnight and are sent from that place

MEDINI BANDHAV,  
June 20th, 1900.

A postal complaint.

to the Sobra branch office, which is only seven miles from Danton, the next day at 11 A.M. The peons of the Sobra post office go out for delivery at 8 A.M. in the morning, consequently the letters which reach Sobra at 11 A.M. are not delivered that day. The postmen visit the villages twice a week and, therefore, any letters, not delivered on the day of one delivery, have to wait two or three days. If arrangements are made to send the mails from the Danton post office to Sobra by night, letters and parcels may be delivered on the very day they reach the Sobra post office.

45. The *Kasipur Nivasi* [Barisal] of the 20th June says that parties experience great difficulty in taking out copies of documents from the District Registry Office at Barisal. The double-fee system has been discontinued, and suitors requiring to file copies of documents in a court, at a short notice, are put to much difficulty, and have often to withdraw their cases. They have to wait even for seven days for copies. Under these circumstances, the number of muharrirs, now employed in the registry office, should be increased. It is said that sometimes copies, when made ready, are kept back for the Registrar's signature.

KASIPUR NIVASI,  
June 20th, 1900.

The District Registry Office at Barisal.

46. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 21st June has the following:—

SANJIVANI,  
June 21st, 1900.

Outstills in the Chota Nagpur Division.

The outstill system is still in force in the Chota Nagpur Division. The inhabitants of this division are mainly Kols, Sonthals, Khera, Manjhi, and other aboriginal tribes, who earn their livelihood as day-labourers. To drink *mahua* wine after a whole day's work seems to be their habit. No other wine is manufactured in the place except *mahua* wine; and this wine, worth one or two annas a bottle, is extensively sold. The Government should at least remove the outstills from the roadsides, if it is impossible to abolish the outstill system from the division. The Government will surely accede to our request if it is informed of the shameful occurrences which frequently take place on the roadsides in consequence of the present position and location of the outstills. The people buy wine in the outstills and drink it, sitting on the roadside, from pots made of *sal* leaves, leaving the pots on the roads when they have been done with. *Sal* leaves are therefore accumulated in such large



heaps on the roads, especially on market days, that the roads become completely covered with them. It is also an ugly sight to see naked and half-naked men and women carousing together by the roadside, and often quarrelling with each other and using obscene language among themselves. The police have often to be called to suppress these drunken brawls. So many customers collect in front of the outstills on market days, that the roads become impassable. It is against the excise law to keep wineshops by the roadside and in other public places. Under these circumstances, we fail to see why these roadsides outstills in the Chota Nagpur Division were not removed long ago. Is it because Government fears that the outstill-keepers will suffer pecuniarily by such removal? If the Government does not remove these outstills from the sides of the public roads from a fear that such a measure would reduce the income of the outstill-keepers, which would mean a diminution of the Government's revenue also, we assure it that its fear is groundless, for the people of this division are so much addicted to drinking, that they are sure to find out the outstills wherever they may be carried.

MIHIR-O-SUDHAKAR,  
June 22nd, 1900.

47. The *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* [Calcutta] of the 22nd June says that there is no hope of the Musalman community improving its condition so long as Musalmans are not appointed more largely than at present to high offices under the Government. At present all Government offices are filled with Hindu clerks, because Hindus are generally the heads of offices.

The Government's attention was, some time ago, drawn to the necessity of employing a larger number of Musalman Deputy Magistrates. It is now requested to increase the number of Musalman munsifs. If it does so, it will not be guilty of partiality to the Musalman community. There are hardly any Musalman munsifs at present, although the number of suits which are instituted by Musalmans in these provinces is very much larger than the number instituted by Hindus in a year. The appointment of a number of Musalman munsifs will open the doors of the munsifs to Musalman clerks. Musalmans as a community are poor, and English education, acquired as it is merely for the sake of earning a livelihood, will be held at a discount among them, if those Musalmans who give themselves an English education fail to find employment.

BHARAT MITRA,  
June 25th, 1900.

48. The *Bharat Mitra* [Calcutta] of the 25th June says that the Special Sub-Registrarship of Bhagalpur having fallen vacant in consequence of the death of its late incumbent, many candidates have come forward for the same. If both seniority and local claim are taken into consideration together, the claims of the Rural Sub-Registrar of Madhaipur must be superior to those of all other candidates. It is to be hoped that the authorities will take the case of that gentlemen into their special consideration.

#### V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

SANJIVANI,  
June 21st, 1900.

49. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 21st June gives a picture of three famine-stricken men, and remarks as follows:—

The famine.

Such a disastrous famine never before occurred in India in the course of a century. The famine-stricken men, represented in the picture, all belong to a respectable class in society, and never experienced bad times before. Their very appearance shows that they do not belong to the labouring class. Starvation has made them pale and lank. When men, belonging to the upper class in society, have been brought to such a plight, one can hardly form an idea of the deplorable condition of the lower classes. It is seldom that even cats and dogs are seen dying on the roads, but thousands of human beings are now dying of starvation on the roads and in jungles without any one to save or succour them. We are not giving an exaggerated account of the famine by publishing the picture. The picture is simply a republication from an English newspaper. The present famine is not due to want of food. There is plenty of food in the country. But there is no money to buy food. This is rather a money famine than a food famine. How can any money be left in the country when some twenty-four or twenty-five crores of rupees have to be annually sent to foreign countries? Famine will not disappear from the country unless this drain is stopped. Frequent famines have left the people



without stamina, and the Government of India will soon find itself in a very difficult situation. We are getting foreign help at present, but how long can we expect help from foreigners? The Government of India says that it is above want, and the Secretary of State for India considers that there is no necessity for asking the Home Government for help, as the Government of India will be able to cope with the situation with its own resources. No rich man will help the Government after hearing the Secretary of State say so. Foreign help is saving the lives of many people in the present crisis, but what will become of India hereafter? The Government ought, therefore, to ascertain the cause of frequent famines in this country and find out a remedy.

50. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 22nd June has the following:—

HITAVADI,  
June 22nd, 1900.

Famine and the question of Indian poverty.

It is not possible for the people of other countries to become acquainted with even a hundredth part of the sufferings which the Indians undergo during a famine. Starvation gradually reduces many to skeletons and kills them. These victims of hunger die in silence and never let the public know of their distress. In every village, in every district, this is happening in many poor but respectable households. Relief works bring not the least relief to such families. The members of respectable Hindu families, male or female, do not do digging or any other earthwork for the purpose of earning a livelihood. Consequently it is not possible to form a correct idea of the condition of the people from the number of labourers alone, although some estimate of the extent of distress may be made from the increase in the number of labourers in the places where relief works are opened.

Government has this time become more attentive than ever to the matter of relief, and is sparing no efforts to make the relief arrangements satisfactory. Still it is our misfortune that no adequate measure of success is being achieved. Some officials are sorry that the people are not expressing their gratitude. This is not the time to feel sorry or express anger; this is the time for granting relief and showing mercy. Generosity and the giving of food to the starving are virtues characteristic of the people of this country, and the exercise of these virtues does not excite much wonder or gratitude here. Nor are the masses in India acquainted with any method of giving adequate expression to their feelings. But it can never be just or reasonable on that account to consider them ungrateful or lacking in a desire to evince their attachment to their benefactors. Everybody can understand that Government and a number of generous and disinterested persons are saving, by a lavish expenditure of their time and money, thousands of people from starvation. For this every body is grateful and sincerely blesses the benefactors. It must, however, be observed in this connection that there are people who think that Government is primarily responsible for the occurrence of such a widespread famine. It is not improbable that a starving people, burdened with taxes and ground down by poverty, will thus blame the authorities. But such condemnation, should, at this time, pass unnoticed.

The fact that the subjects of the civilised British Government, which is always anxious to promote their welfare, are dying from starvation by the hundred and the thousand, the fact that the Indians whose food-grains have always removed food scarcity in other countries are at this moment perishing from want of food, is one that can be accounted for only by the supposition that the people of this country are extremely ill-fated. It is a blot on English rule that the subjects of the British Government are now pinched with distress and are seeking the help of foreigners. An indelible stain will be cast on the system of British Administration if Government does not succeed in keeping the people alive during this famine. Our happy homes are becoming cremation grounds, and India is now going about begging at the door of every nation. There is food in the country, but no money to purchase it with. Poverty is the cause of all mischief. The English must remove this national poverty.

#### VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

51. The *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* [Calcutta] of the 22nd June considers the present Bengali year 1307 (B.S.) as a very bad year for the Indian Musalmans. There have been fearful riots between Hindus and Musalmans in many

Hindu newspapers in riots between Hindus and Musalmans.

MIHIR-O-SUDHAKAR,  
June 22nd, 1900.



places, in which the former have not only prevented the the latter from performing their religious observances, but have also committed dreadful oppression on them. It is a matter of regret and wonder that Hindu newspapers are all silent on this matter.

PRABHAT,  
June 27th, 1900.

52. The *Prabhat* [Calcutta] of the 27th June has the following :—

We informed our readers that in the Khulna case Mr. Hamilton had refused to give copies of the papers to the Editor of the *Khulna*. Before we published this information, we saw it mentioned in the *Bengalee* newspaper that Mr. Hamilton had not only refused to supply copies, but had passed strictures against the press. For want of evidence we did not believe this, but every other paper raised a howl over it, saying that Mr. Hamilton had abused the native newspapers as a class, and asking him what right he had to do so. We do not know whether an extract from the *Bengalee* was also wired to England. We, however, thought that it would have been better first of all to publish Mr. Hamilton's order, and then let the editor of each newspaper make what remarks he pleased thereon. Now that very paper, the *Bengalee*, states that Mr. Hamilton said nothing about newspapers and has expressed regret and withdrawn what he had written. So much for the *Bengalee*. But will the other two dozen papers which howled together like jackals against Mr. Hamilton admit their error? English papers conducted by natives look down with contempt on vernacular newspapers, but we do not see much difference between the former and the latter. The former are nothing but native papers in an English garb. The *Bengalee* has lost its prestige, and as for the other papers which followed its example, what shall we say of them? Such carelessness as they have been guilty of is perfectly unwarranted and unpardonable. It is no wonder that the Government should treat native papers with scant respect.

DAINIK SAMACHAR,  
June 27th, 1900.

53. The *Dainik Samachar* [Calcutta] of the 27th June is glad to see that the Secretary of State for India has granted a literary pension of Rs. 25 per month to Babu Hem Chandra Banerji.

#### URIYA PAPERS.

URIYA AND  
NAVASAMBAD,  
June 6th, 1900.

54. The *Uriya and Navasambad* [Balasore] of the 6th June, is of opinion that heavy showers of rain accompanied by strong wind, which visited the Balasore District a few days ago, have not helped agricultural operations in any way. On the other hand, they prevented cultivators from sowing paddy seeds at an early date.

SAMBALPUR  
HITAISHINI,  
June 6th, 1900.

55. The *Sambalpur Hitaishini* [Bamra] of the 6th June is of opinion that telegraphic and tramway communications may be opened in select Tributary States of Orissa; thereby giving encouragement to trade and industry. The writer is of opinion that the States may gain thereby in other ways.

SAMBALPUR  
HITAISHINI,  
June 7th, 1900.

56. The *Sambalpur Hitaishini* [Bamra] of the 7th June is sorry to learn that the Indian Finance Commission have taken full five years to submit their report, and have decided that the United Kingdom ought to pay only 44 lakhs towards the expenses incurred under different heads in England by India, and observes that the recommendations of the Commission ought to be carried out without any more delay, as the reduction of the above expenses by 44 lakhs will be a great relief to poor and famished India. The writer is of opinion that England ought to pay a large amount, as India is very poor and is unable to meet expenses which are not legitimately hers.

UTKALDIPIKA,  
June 9th, 1900.

57. The *Utkaldipika* [Cuttack] of the 9th June regrets to learn that no one appeared from Orissa at the last competitive examination for the Provincial and Subordinate Civil Services from Orissa, and hopes that some will try to appear at the next examination.



## ASSAM PAPERS.

55. The *Silchar* [Silchar] of the 15th June has following:—

SILCHAR,  
June 15th, 1900.

Distribution of famine relief. It rends one's heart to see the pitiable appearances of the famine stricken men and women. The Government is supplying food for the famine-stricken persons, but some lowminded officers of the Government, who must be demons in human shape, are misappropriating it. We, therefore, request the Government to entrust the charge of distributing food to some wealthy and respectable Brahmo and Christain missionaries, instead of entrusting it to paid officers. This will effect a saving and also check all abuses.

59. The *Paridarsak* [Sylhet] of the 16th June says that it melts one's heart to see the cruel manner in which people carry fowls, ducks, sheep, and goats from the Kazir Bazar in Sylhet. Coachmen and cartmen also treat their horses and oxen very cruelly. Act I (B.C.) of 1869 forbids any cruelty to domestic animals. There is no reason why this law should be a dead-letter in Sylhet. The attention of the Government is drawn to this matter.

PARIDARSAK,  
June 16th, 1900.

60. The same paper has the following in English:—

PARIDARSAK.

Malarial fever in Sylhet. Does any of our readers consider it worth his while to spend a sigh over the great havoc that the dreadful malarial fever has been making in the district of Sylhet, especially in this poor town of antiquity. The malarial fever is not a new epidemic in the province of Bengal. Districts after districts, towns after towns, villages after villages have been known to be ruined through the effects of this fell disease. In Assam the terrible *Kala-azar*, which has become a scare to strangers and natives alike, has been proved to be nothing but malarial fever of a very bad type.

For the last few years the district of Sylhet, which was sometime considered a sanitarium in this quarter of the province, has fallen a victim to this ruinous epidemic. Never before in the history of malarial epidemics has the mortality been known to have risen so high as it has been in this town of Sylhet.

The greatest mortality in Bengal from fever hails from the districts of Noakhali, Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri, and Rajshahi. Even in these districts the mortality has not reached such an astounding figure as 66.01 per thousand. The death per thousand of Rajshahi from malarial fever is 31.16; that of Jalpaiguri the same number; that of Dinajpur, 33.43, and that of Noakhali, 35.16, the highest mortality in Bengal recorded in the past year. The mortality in the district of Jessore, once considered ruined and abandoned, did not rise above 26.71 per thousand. But the mortality in this cursed town of Sylhet we do not at present give the figures of the villages which would be proportionately greater) reached per thousand, a figure like 66.01 in 1896-97, 50.75 in 1897-98, 57.4 in 1898-99, and 52.25 in 1899-1900 (March). The population of this town is little over fourteen thousand, and would it not then stagger even the boldest optimist to think for a moment that in a poor town of fourteen thousand inhabitants 66 persons in every thousand are taken away from the face of this fair earth by malarial fever? If this deplorable state of things continues unabated for some years to come, it is pretty sure that this town will be practically depopulated.

We give below a tabular statement comparing the rates of births and deaths per thousand of population of the town of Sylhet for the last six years:—

Year.		Birth.	Death.	Average per thousand of population.	
1894-95	...	238	410	16.96	29.22
1895-96	...	324	366	23.10	26.09
1896-97	...	349	926	24.88	66.01
1897-98	...	181	712	12.90	50.75
1898-99	...	182	807	12.9	57.4
1899-1900	...	277	733	19.74	52.25

The above table clearly shows the terrible devastation that is being made over the poor residents of this town since the great earthquake of 1897. In



the year of the earthquake nearly one-fourteenth of the inhabitants of the town were carried off. Thenceforward the townspeople have been passing through a severe calamity, the like of which has never been known in this part of the country, and from whose clutches it is not known if ever it would be the fortune of the dumb millions to extricate themselves.

These depressing circumstances alas! are not enough to make any patriot ponder for a moment over the misfortunes that have been hovering over the poor residents of this town. Even the Government do not seem to bestir themselves to enquire into the cause of this heavy mortality and to think of some remedy to stamp out the disease.

The dreadful *Kala-azar* of Assam also seems to make its unwelcome presence bitterly felt in this district. Villages towards the north-west of Fenchuganj thana, bordering on the banks of the Kusiara, such as Khatkai, Manickkona and others in the North Sylhet Division and Panchgaon, Satgaon, Patharia and others in the South Sylhet Division have fallen victims to the ravages of this fearful and persistent epidemic.

The plague made its appearance in Calcutta in 1898, and all possible stringent measures were adopted by the Government and the municipality to ward off the disease, and thanks to the untiring efforts of the city fathers the epidemic could not make any permanent stronghold in that city!

The first outbreak of plague in Calcutta lasted only for six months, and counted among its victims only 189 souls. The recurrence in 1899 abated with 818 victims, but the highest mortality reached at the last outbreak was 170 per diem. The total population of Calcutta is over fourteen lakhs; calculating, therefore, 170 as the highest death-rate per diem, the average mortality per thousand of the whole population comes to only 10·9. But the highest death-rate per thousand from fever recorded in this poor, uncared-for town of Sylhet, is 57·4—over five times that of Calcutta. Comparing now the heavy mortality from malarial fever in the town of Sylhet with a small number of population of only fourteen thousand with that of Calcutta with a population of fourteen lakhs, it may be positively asserted that there is a far more dangerous pestilence here raging throughout the year than there has been in Calcutta for a much shorter period; but it is a pity that the Government here do not seem to be properly active in finding out some means of counteracting the effects of the disease. Although the ravages caused by malarial fever are found to be much more severe than that caused by the plague, the consternation—the panic produced by an outbreak of plague in any part of the province—is never equalled by all the combined anxiety evinced by the inhabitants of any locality where malaria prevails in the severest form. The answer lies perhaps in the nature of the disease, the difference between the two being a question of time. The one kills its prey only within so short a period as twenty-four hours, while in the case of the other, the victim is seen to drag on his miserable existence for months, and sometimes for years.

The bulk of the population of this province is poor and quite powerless in money or in might to successfully struggle with this dreadful disease. We, therefore, pray that the local Government may come to the rescue of the millions of the people of Assam, by starting an enquiry into the causes of the disease and find out some sure remedy against its further progress.

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BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,  
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